Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

Volume 12, Issue 8 8/13

NGC News

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*Select the black NGC Retro Holder with the Buffalo label when you submit your 2013 American Buffalo 1-ounce Gold Reverse Proof coins. ****See Note About ANA Sales Below**** The NGC Retro Holder promotion ends December 31, 2013.*

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NGC Retro Holder Available for 2013 American Buffalo 1-ounce Gold Reverse Proof

Posted on 8/8/2013

Select the black NGC Retro Holder with the Buffalo label when you submit your 2013 American Buffalo 1-ounce Gold Reverse Proof coins. ***See Note About ANA Sales Below*** *The NGC Retro Holder promotion ends December 31, 2013.*

ANA Sales Note: All Reverse Proof Gold Buffalo coins that are submitted to NGC at the Chicago ANA show will receive the special pedigree **"CHICAGO ANA RELEASES."** Regular Proof Gold Buffalo coins that are purchased at the Chicago ANA show and submitted to NGC at the show with the original purchase receipt will also receive the special pedigree **"CHICAGO ANA RELEASES."** Coins must be submitted to NGC at the ANA show to receive the pedigree.

The US Mint is releasing the 2013 American Buffalo One Ounce Gold Reverse Proof. This is the first Reverse Proof Gold Buffalo coin to be struck by the US Mint. The coin is on sale at the US Mint starting August 8, 2013.

NGC is offering our black Retro Holder and Buffalo label for this coin. Note: The NGC Retro Holder promotion ends December 31, 2013.

Or, choose the traditional NGC white holder with one of the following label options listed below.

NGC white holder label options:

- Buffalo
- Early Releases® (Blue)
- First Releases® (Blue)
- NGC Standard (Brown)

Special instructions must be followed in order for coins to qualify.

Submission Instructions:

- Remove the coins from the US Mint packaging and submit them raw in capsules. Do not send the Mint packaging.
- Select the **Modern** tier or higher and select **Special Label/Releases**. The 5-coin minimum applies.
- Submissions for the black Retro Holder and traditional white holder must be on separate submission forms.
- All coins that arrive at NGC during the Early Releases period will automatically be labeled as "Early Releases".
- To opt out of the Early or First Releases designations, write "No Early/First Releases" on the submission form.
- If you want Mint capsules returned, select “Return packaging” in the Services box on the submission form.
- ReHolders are accepted.

Black Retro Holder:

- The Buffalo label is the only label option for the Retro Holder.
- RETRO HOLDER must be clearly written on the submission form.
- **Important:** The black Retro holder with the Buffalo label will be available on any US Buffalo coin from 2006-2013, including the fractionals from 2008.

White Holder:

- If you prefer the white holder, write the selected label on the submission

form: "NGC Buffalo label", "Early Releases (Blue) label", "First Releases (Blue) label" or "Standard (Brown) label".

Dealers and Elite Collectors Society members should contact NGC for bulk submission instructions and guidelines.

Questions? Contact NGC Customer Service at service@NGCcoin.com or 1-800-NGC-COIN (1-800-642-2646).

Collectors Society paid members can submit directly to NGC. Not an NGC Collectors Society member? Paid memberships start at just $39/year. Join as a Premium member, or upgrade to Premium membership, and you'll receive a coupon to have five coins graded for free. Join today.

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NGC Certifies Part Two of the Eric P. Newman Collection

Posted on 7/31/2013

NGC has graded and encapsulated the highly anticipated second installation of the coin collection assembled by noted numismatic writer and researcher Eric P. Newman. ***Heritage Auctions has designated the week of Nov. 11-16, 2013, as "Newman Week in New York City" to honor the legacy of esteemed numismatic researcher, author and collector Eric P. Newman, culminating on the days of Nov. 15 and 16, with the second eagerly anticipated offering of numismatic rarities from Newman's legendary collection.***

The 1,827 coin group includes a number of exceptional high grade rarities, many of which rank as the finest known, along with several rare varieties.

NGC had previously been chosen by the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society (EPNNES) to certify part one of the Newman Collection. EPNNES selected NGC to grade part two of the collection after the successful multi-million dollar sale of the NGC-certified Newman Part I by Heritage Auctions on April 25,

2013.

The selections that comprise Newman Part II are primarily his US two cent pieces through silver dollars, as well as his commemorative coins. Many of the coins were purchased by Newman directly from the estate of famed collector “Colonel” E.H.R. Green in the early 1940s. Newman, now 102, began collecting and researching coins in the 1920s and continues to be active in numismatic scholarship.

“We are honored that EPNNES again chose NGC to certify selections from the Newman Collection,” said Mark Salzberg, chairman of NGC. “Newman Part Two is nothing short of extraordinary. Many of these coins have achieved previously unimaginable grades, and the sale of these specimens by Heritage Auctions in November will undoubtedly be a milestone event for numismatics.”

Many of the most impressive coins in Newman Part Two are pedigreed to “Colonel” Green. Certainly the most significant are the quarter dollars, of which the first-year 1796 is the highlight. Graded NGC MS 67+★, it is the finest known example of this popular low mintage issue. Newman’s 1815 Quarter is also graded MS 67+★ by NGC and is believed to be the finest known. Another important Capped Bust Quarter is the 1828 25/50, which at NGC MS 67★ is by far the finest known example of this popular variety and a full four points higher than the second best NGC-certified specimen.

The Seated Liberty Quarters are anchored by an exceptional run of high grade No Motto pieces. The 1852 and 1857 are both graded a remarkable MS 68★ by NGC. These are followed by the 1851 and 1855 With Arrows in NGC MS 67+★ and the 1848, 1854 With Arrows and 1858 in NGC MS 67★. An 1853 No Arrows Quarter graded MS 67 by NGC is notable as well.

Newman’s half dollars are also magnificent and include a number of high grade coins not seen on the market in nearly a century. Both varieties of the rare 1796 Half Dollar are represented: O-101, the 15-star variant, is graded NGC MS 62, while O-102, identified by the 16 obverse stars, is graded an astonishing MS 63 by NGC.

The 1813 Half Dollar, attributed as O-107a, is a standout condition rarity and with a grade of NGC MS 67+★ it is easily the finest certified of this date. The NGC MS 65 New Orleans 1840 Half Dollar with no mintmark is among the best preserved examples of this popular type, and the 1866-S No Motto Half Dollar graded NGC MS 67 is yet another finest known.

Several high grade pieces headline Newman's silver dollars. The 1799 BB-157, B-5 Dollar graded NGC MS 67 is tied with just one other coin as the finest Early Dollar to be certified by NGC. An NGC MS 65+ 1846 Dollar is the highest example ever graded of this issue, and Newman's 1795 BB-51, B-14 Draped Bust Dollar graded NGC MS 66+★ is nothing short of exceptional.

Other highlights from Newman Part II that are either the finest known or the finest certified include an 1833 LM-1 Half Dime graded NGC MS 67, a 1798/7 JR-1 16 Stars Reverse Dime graded NGC MS 65★, an 1827 JR-12 Dime graded NGC MS 66+ and an exceedingly rare 1841 No Drapery Dime graded NGC PF 67+. The selections also boasted Newman's second example of the extremely rare 1915 No S Judd-1961 Panama-Pacific Pattern Half Dollar, which was graded PF 64 by NGC.

Newman Part II will be sold by Heritage Auctions at the Fletcher-Sinclair Mansion in New York City on November 15 and 16, 2013. Prominent dealer Stuart Levine of Marblehead, Massachusetts, serves as a numismatic advisor for EPNNES. Images and descriptions for the consignment will be available at the Heritage Auctions website, in September.

EPNNES Foundation Statement Items being sold are from the extensive collection of Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society (a Missouri not-for-profit corporation) and have been assembled over a period of 90 years. Proceeds of the sale of all items will be used exclusively for supplementing the Society's museum operations and scholarly numismatic research efforts and for the benefit of other not-for-profit institutions selected by Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society for public purposes.

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NGC Grader Spots Rare Morgan Dollar Variety

Posted on 8/20/2013

A recent bulk submission included a rare San Francisco 1921 Morgan Dollar hidden among nearly 1,000 other Morgan Dollars.

An NGC grader was examining a bulk submission of nearly 1,000 Morgan Dollars when one coin stood out. The submission comprised a variety of dates and most of the coins were in low grades. These coins might sell for anywhere from $30 to $300 after NGC certification.

The sharp-eyed NGC grader saw one coin though that he instantly recognized to be an elusive Morgan variety worth upwards of $1,000. At first glance this coin appears to be a 1921 Morgan Dollar struck at Philadelphia with no mintmark. However, it is actually a San Francisco 1921 Morgan Dollar with a nearly invisible outline of the “S” mintmark – a result of the coining die being filled with grease at the location of the mintmark.

Left: Outline of "S" Mintmark; Right: Raised Die Gouge
Click images to enlarge.

The grader knew that the key diagnostic for this scarce variety was a raised die gouge between the B and U of PLURIBUS on the obverse, which is prominently seen on this example. Morgan Dollar varieties are attributed as “VAMs,” an acronym created from the first letters of the last names of Leroy C. Van Allen and

A. George Mallis, the authors of the first reference book for Morgan Dollar varieties. This coin is attributed as 1921-S VAM-6B and is listed as one of the “Hit List 40” VAMs.

NGC offers its VarietyPlus® attribution service for major varieties of United States coins. To have a variety evaluated by NGC, simply select VarietyPlus on the NGC submission form. NGC publishes a complete list of varieties it recognizes along with helpful attribution tips and photographs on the NGC website under “NGC Research.” Visit the free VarietyPlus resource now >

NGC Dealers and Collectors Society Elite members can take advantage of bulk submission rates for eligible coin types. A bulk submission is considered to be 100 or more coins of the same type. Learn more about bulk submission rates >

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United States

NGC Registry Releases "Circulated Coins Only" Category

Posted on 7/22/2013

The NGC Registry now includes a Circulated Coins Only category for coins graded AU 58 and below.

SARASOTA, Fla. (July 22, 2013) — Numismatic Guaranty Corporation® (NGC®) has launched a new "Circulated Coins Only" category for the popular online NGC Registry. The Circulated Coins Only category accepts NGC-certified coins graded AU 58 and below.

These sets recognize that many collectors prefer to complete sets entirely with coins that were used in commerce. The scoring system is the same as for traditional NGC Registry sets, but Mint State coins are not accepted. Set types are listed for every major category of classic United States coins.

"We continue to expand and improve the NGC Registry based on collector feedback," says Mark Salzberg, Chairman of NGC. "After more than a decade, the NGC Registry is more popular than ever, and we think that the addition of Circulated Coins Only sets will be great news for collectors."

Established in 2001, the NGC Registry allows collectors to display their coins online and compete for awards and recognition. It has since become the largest online community of coin collectors with more than 80,000 registered sets and nearly 3,500 set types. The NGC Registry is available for free at the NGC Collectors Society website.

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United States

NGC Introduction to Grading Class at Philadelphia Expo

Posted on 8/6/2013

The Introduction to Grading class will be held on September 21, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Register today!

NGC will conduct an Introduction to Grading class on Saturday, September 21, 2013 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Whitman Philadelphia Expo. The cost for the class is $149 to the first 20 paid NGC Collectors Society members (new attendees only) who register. Lunch will be provided. Classroom space is provided courtesy of the Whitman Expo.

Introduction to Grading will cover a variety of important grading topics including proper lighting, the subtleties of About Uncirculated versus Mint State, counterfeit detection, the differences between strike versus wear and the key attributes commonly considered to constitute positive eye appeal.

The class will be taught by NGC grader John Schuch, II. John joined NGC in 2004 and has worked as a grader for 9 years, advancing his knowledge and passion for rare coins. He has taught numerous grading classes at the American Numismatic Association's Summer Seminar.

The class is limited to 20 students and is available to paid NGC Collectors Society members on a first-come basis. New attendees only. **Advance registration is**

John Schuch, II, NGC Grader

The son of a coin dealer, John grew up around coins. He started working summers for his father at the age of 15, bird-dogging coins for dealers. After high school, he worked full time for his father's business. At 20, John enlisted in the Army and served for four years. After

required. Click here to register. Enter code: grading921 and press the "Proceed" button. You will receive an email with payment instructions.

If the class is full, email class@ngccoin.com to be added to a Wait List. You will be contacted if space becomes available.

leaving the Army, he decided to pursue numismatics as his career. He joined NGC in 2004 and has worked as a grader for 9 years, rising up the ranks advancing his knowledge and passion for rare coins.

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United States

NGC Accepting Submissions at Whitman Expo in Philadelphia

Posted on 8/13/2013

Stop by the NGC table at the Whitman Philadelphia Fall Expo to drop off your regular grading submissions.

NGC will be accepting regular submissions for all service levels* at the Whitman Fall Expo in Philadelphia, at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA on Thursday, September 19 to Saturday, September 21, 2013. NGC will be at booth #122. All submissions will be sent to our office in Sarasota, FL. Services include World Services, Ancient Coin Services, Bulk, PHOTO PROOF® and more. Check with show representatives for details. Cut-off time for all submissions will be 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 21.

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Note:

- Due to the special handling required, NGC does not accept submissions of the following coins at this show for regular service submissions to be returned to the NGC offices: Coins over 3.5" (90 mm) in diameter and .39" (10 mm) in depth, 2013 American Buffalo One Ounce Gold Reverse Proof, West Point 2-coin set, San Francisco 2-coin Proof set, Coin & Currency sets, 25th Anniversary Eagles, 20th Anniversary Eagles, Early Releases, American Liberty Series and 10th Anniversary Platinum Sets. These submissions must be sent directly to Sarasota, FL, by the submitter.
- *Does not include 5-ounce coins.

Questions should be directed to NGC customer service at service@NGCcoin.com or 1-800-NGC-COIN (642-2646).

Visit our table for answers to any questions about the services offered by NGC.

Please remember that NGC does not provide opinions or free evaluations of coins at trade shows.

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United States

NGC Ancients: Coinage of the Persian (Achaemenid) Empire

Posted on 8/13/2013

This month, NGC Ancients examines some of the first coinage of the ancient world.

Though sometimes overshadowed by powerful Greek city-states and the Roman Empire of antiquity, the Achaemenid Persians founded one of the most powerful empires in the history of Western civilization. Early historical details are murky, but it would appear that the foundation of this important ancient empire was under way by about 650 BC. The first Persian king to be mentioned in contemporary historical sources is Cyrus I "The Great" (c.559/8-530 BC), who unified territories stretching from Central Asia to Phoenicia and Lydia.

In 547 BC, Cyrus conquered the Lydian Kingdom, then under the rule of King Croesus (c.561-547/6 BC). Croesus is a noteworthy figure in ancient numismatics, as he is believed to have pioneered the idea of a bi-metallic coinage system that contained both gold and silver coins of high purity. These coins featured on the obverse the confronted foreparts of a lion and a bull, and a simple incuse punch on the reverse. This example of a gold stater, thought to have been issued c.550 BC at the Sardes mint, is in exceptionally fine condition and is struck to the "heavy" weight standard of c.10.5 grams.

Click image to enlarge.

Initially, it seems Cyrus continued to issue these gold and silver coins of Croesus' type after bringing Lydia under the Persian banner. This coin is an excellent example of a silver siglos that most likely was issued after the defeat of Croesus – it is thought to have been struck c.545-520 BC.

Click image to enlarge.

The next important Persian king, Darius I (c.522/1-486 BC), spent much of his career expanding upon the conquests of Cyrus. He was able to add lands ranging from Greece to Pakistan, and even invaded North Africa. From a numismatic standpoint, this king is important as the first Persian ruler to issue a uniquely Persian coinage. Breaking with the precedent of re-issuing the Lydian types of Croesus, Darius introduced a coinage with new designs in about 520 BC.

These silver coins (basic unit, siglos), were struck on small, thick planchets and feature a bearded archer (thought to represent the king or a hero) on the obverse, and an incuse punch on the reverse. This piece is an example of the earliest style of this series (c.520-510/05 BC) – the rigid archer is depicted from the waist up, with a bow and some arrows in hand.

Click image to enlarge.

The style of Persian sigloi, and their gold counterparts (basic unit, daric, which shared the designs of the silver pieces) underwent another evolution around 510-

505 BC. Now, the hero-king is depicted as a full figure in a kneeling-running posture, with a quiver on his back, about to release an arrow. This gold daric, minted c.505-480 BC, illustrates the change in style.

Click image to enlarge.

Yet another stylistic change occurred c.490-480 BC, probably under Xerxes (486-465 BC), the son and successor of Darius. Though the obverse figure still occupies almost the same position as before, it now appears even more as if he might be in motion while still kneeling. Additionally, instead of drawing his bowstring, the figure merely holds the bow and with his right hand holds a spear.

Click image to enlarge.

Xerxes' design for darics and sigloi would prove to be the longest-running of the Persian series. For about 150 years, the only significant change was to replace the king's spear with a dagger, which happened on some of the issues starting in about 450 BC. The quality of die execution would decline over the ensuing decades. This siglos, struck c.455-420 BC and showing the figure with a dagger and bow, illustrates a stylistic degradation of the die work.

Click image to enlarge.

Interestingly, a stylistic recovery of Persian coinage took place c.375 BC. This daric, struck around that time, illustrates great improvement in the depiction of the hero-king.

Click image to enlarge.

This basic design would outlast the Persian Empire itself, which was conquered by Alexander III “The Great” during a five year period ending in 329 BC. The Greeks who oversaw the territories of the once-mighty Persian Empire elected to continue the coinage types of the Persians until c.300 BC. This daric was struck by an unknown satrap (regional ruler) of Alexander III, c.328-311 BC.

Click image to enlarge.

Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group.

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United States

Counterfeit Detection: 1892 Half Eagle

Posted on 8/16/2013

Many counterfeit US gold coins originated in the 1960s and 1970s in the Middle East.

The 1892 Half Eagle is a relatively common issue with a mintage of 753,480 pieces. This date can easily be located in circulated grades through MS 62, the grade most frequently encountered by NGC. At that level the NGC US Coin Price Guide reports a value of $710, which ranks it with some of the other popular Type coins from the Liberty Half Eagle series.

Counterfeits exist for virtually every date of US gold coins and the 1892 Half Eagle is no exception. Because this is a common date, the fakes were generally not intended to fool collectors. Rather, many of the spurious pieces originated in 1960s and 1970s in the Middle East (particularly Lebanon), where merchants preferred gold in coin form as a store of value. The merchants were not particularly concerned with the authenticity of the coin as long as it had the correct weight and composition.

A number of these Middle Eastern fakes ended up in the US, where private ownership of gold was illegal until December 31, 1974. Many of them were likely imported by people who wanted to own gold coins, but could not legally acquire genuine US gold coins domestically.

A counterfeit 1892 Half Eagle submitted to NGC is a typical Middle Eastern counterfeit. The coin has the same design, weight and composition as a genuine example. The finer details, however, are lacking. There is moderate softness on both sides but primarily at the digits and letters, which can appear almost cartoonish. There are also a number of raised lines—often seen on fakes—by the denticles, especially on the reverse. A few particularly noticeable raised lines can be seen above the D in UNITED and the F in OF. These are almost never seen on

genuine specimens.

Counterfeit 1892 Half Eagle
Click images to enlarge.

Click images to enlarge.

Although these Middle Eastern counterfeits were not manufactured to deceive numismatists, many have found their way into collections. As older collections are sold, the fakes will reappear in the marketplace. Luckily, the spurious pieces still have significant intrinsic value because of their gold content.

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United States

USA Coin Album: Transitional Pairs - Conclusion

Posted on 8/28/2013

David's study of different coin types struck in the same year concludes this month with several popular 20th-century issues.

In theory there are three collectors who could hope to acquire both types of 1913 nickels, as that is the number of Liberty Head nickels dated 1913 which are in private ownership. For the rest of us, however, we will have to content ourselves with just the two major varieties of 1913 Indian Head/Buffalo nickels, but then these are not different design types in the strictest sense.

More promising are the transitional issues of 1916. Through his misinterpretation of the 1890 law requiring that coin designs be revised not more often than once in 25 years, Mint Director Robert M. Woolley (1915-16) was under the impression that new types were mandatory after 25 years coinage. Therefore, he initiated a design competition that resulted in three new coins to replace Charles Barber's Liberty Head pieces of 1892. These became the Winged Head Liberty (Mercury) dime, the Standing Liberty quarter dollar and the Walking Liberty half dollar. These were all coined with the date 1916, though only the dime reached circulation before the end of that year.

The mint delayed production of dimes as long as it could during 1916, in the hope that the new dies soon would be ready, but the demand for additional coins required that these be struck with the old design. The mints at Philadelphia and San Francisco each coined substantial quantities of Barber dimes dated 1916, and they followed this with even greater numbers of "Mercury" dimes in the fall. All four issues are readily available in grades up through MS-64. The 1916(P)

Mercury dime was widely hoarded for its novelty and therefore is affordable in MS-65. The Denver Mint contributed a mere 264,000 pieces of the Mercury type, as it had been ordered to focus on quarter dollar production during the final quarter of 1916. Scarce across all grades, the 1916-D dime may be omitted from a transitional collection.

Enough 1916-dated quarters were coined of the old type at the Philadelphia and Denver Mints that these are readily collectable in all grades through MS-64. Dies for the 1916 Standing Liberty quarter were not ready until the eleventh hour, and its mintage of just 52,000 pieces will make for an expensive transitional pair, though circulated examples are not truly rare. A possible alternative is found in the two major varieties of the SLQ coined during 1917. Both sides of the coin were radically altered in mid-year, and a total of six varieties resulted from coinage of both styles at all three mints. These are readily obtainable in grades through MS-64, and they make for a very attractive collection.

The Treasury held a sufficient supply of half dollars in 1916 that the mints were able to forestall producing new ones until the Walking Liberty dies were ready in the fall. Thus, it was the only one of the new coins to not result in a transitional pair.

Among the most appealing of design pairs involves the nickels of 1938. It was known early in the year that a new design by Felix Schlag portraying Thomas Jefferson would be coined shortly, but the Denver Mint was directed to strike just over seven million nickels with Fraser's old Indian Head/Buffalo design. Ironically, these coins were very slow to enter circulation, and collectors beseeched both the Treasury and banks for examples of the 1938-D Buffalo nickel throughout the year. Equally difficult to find during that year of economic depression was the new Jefferson nickel. Though produced in the millions by all three mints and officially released during the fall of 1938, a year later collectors were still reporting in numismatic publications that examples were rarely seen. Instead, most of the newly released nickels were dated 1936 and 1937! This short supply was sorted out in time, and today both types are readily available in all grades through MS-66, with only the 1938-S nickel being scarce in higher grades.

Since 1938 the various United States Mints have been able to produce sufficient numbers of coins in any year that all new designs have been introduced without overlapping older types. The sole exceptions in recent years have been the various circulating commemorative issues that began in 1999. These include the 50 States quarter program (1999-2008, five types per year), the supplemental quarter program for non-states (six coins in 2009), the America the Beautiful quarter program (2010-21, five coins per year) and the Presidential dollars

program (2007-16, four coins per year). Coined concurrently with the Presidential dollars has been Sacagawea dollar (2007-08) and its follow-up program, the Native American dollars (2009-?, new reverse each year).

These commemorative programs don't represent true transitional types, as the new designs are not being introduced solely for the purpose of replacing the older designs, though they may have that net result. Unfortunately, it appears that the dollar coins have been mandated without respect to any demand for them in circulation, and this only recently led to their production being limited to collector sales alone. Thus, the dollar coins being minted today have joined the half dollar as useless vanities having little or no impact on daily commerce.

David W. Lange's column, "USA Coin Album," appears monthly in the Numismatist, *the official publication of the American Numismatic Association.*

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Chinese Coins: Condition, Condition, Condition!

Posted by Peter Anthony on 8/28/2013

Sooner or later, condition comes into play when prices are set.

Here are some July 2013 auction prices for 1983 10 Yuan Proof Silver Panda coin: $403, $1,434, $1,755 and $3,712. Why the huge disparities in price? I once said to Nick Brown, the late President of Majestic Rarities, that when there are big surprises in auction prices, 90% of the time it's due to condition. Nick laughed and shot back, "It's more like 99% of the time!" The 1983 coins are perfect examples: the $404 coin was ungraded and impaired, the $1,434 coin was NGC-graded PF 67, the $1,755 coin was NGC-graded PF 68 and the $3,712 sale was an NGC PF 69.

In numismatics sooner or later condition comes into play whenever prices are set. At one time it was enough for collectors to know if a coin was circulated or uncirculated. Over time we have learned to distinguish between better and lesser strikes, brilliant and dull lusters and various imperfections. As Nick added, "I try to purchase coins that are high quality with great eye appeal. Having high quality coins with great eye appeal allows coins to sell themselves. I know I will pay a premium for a nice looking coin over the same coin that is not as nice looking."

As the 1983 Silver Panda prices show, even minor differences in quality can lead to major differences in price. In almost all cases, the closer a coin is to its original state the more desirable it is. There is both beauty and history associated with original luster coins. I am reminded of this at every auction preview. With careful inspection it's often possible to predict which coins will bring the highest prices. Whether graded or ungraded some coins just have an extra zing, or eye appeal, that makes them special.

Graded and encapsulated coins have become the global standard. If an expensive coin is not authenticated and graded, buyers wonder why not and often

pay less for it – or maybe refuse to buy it at all. This same attitude is now widespread among modern Chinese coin collectors.

There are a couple of good reasons for this. The China Mint's original packaging is either a soft plastic pouch or a plastic capsule, or both. No one I know can consistently and accurately evaluate coins through these barriers. This is especially true if the plastic has turned yellow or faded with time. Even the most experienced buyers can be surprised by what lies behind an original double seal, assuming the seal is even original. Plastic pouches are all too easy to alter and many substandard coins have been resealed to cover up their imperfections.

In the bad old days a coin's "grade" often changed depending on if the owner was a buyer or seller. Buyers couldn't even be certain that a coin was genuine! Nowadays, with independent companies like NGC grading and authenticating coins this issue has largely vanished. This has allowed the entire hobby to expand and thrive. So what's the difference between a $403 coin and a $3,712? Condition, condition, condition!

Peter Anthony is an expert on Chinese modern coins with a particular focus on Panda coins. He as an analyst for the NGC Chinese Modern Coin Price Guide as well as a consultant on Chinese modern coins.

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From the NGC Archives: 1922 Grant Gold Dollar with Star

Posted on 8/13/2013

Commemorative gold dollars were minted in 1922 to honor the centennial of the birth of Ulysses S. Grant, famed general and president.

The sale of these coins was intended to raise funds for a memorial to this popular figure in his birthplace of Point Pleasant, Ohio.

Though similar in mintage and rarity, the Grant Centennial Dollar with incuse star has traditionally been more popular than its star-less brother. This may be due to association with the half-dollar of this type, for which the starred variety is much scarcer. An aesthetically delightful coin, this specimen displays rich, satiny luster on both sides. Its strike is absolutely full, with fine wire rims. The original die-polishing lines are still evident in a swirling pattern on either side. Light, orange toning is just barely visible, along with a short toning streak on the obverse.

Are you interested in learning more about these coins? Click here to visit the NGC Coin Explorer and read on.

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United States

Conservation Showcase: 1916-S Buffalo Nickel

Posted on 8/9/2013

Read more about a recently conserved coin from the NCS conservation laboratory.

BEFORE CONSERVATION

click to enlarge *click to enlarge*

AFTER CONSERVATION

click to enlarge *click to enlarge*

Coin holders containing the plasticizer PVC can with time and common environmental conditions lead to the development of dangerous residues on the surface of the coin within. Such is the case with this 1916-S Buffalo Nickel recently submitted to NCS. The green wet appearing residues in the crevices of the devices and legends are a clear sign that this coin has spent too much time in a holder containing PVC.

If left alone, PVC residue can permanently damage the surface of a coin through corrosion. This buffalo nickel was submitted for conservation just in time as the residue was able to be safely removed. A lustrous natural appearing coin was left after the green residue was removed. The coin was able to grade numerically with NGC following the conservation work.

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United States

2014 Baseball Commemorative Coins

Posted on 8/13/2013

The reverse design for the 2014 National Baseball Hall of Fame Commemorative Coins was unveiled during Induction Weekend festivities in Cooperstown, N.Y.

[COOPERSTOWN, NY] – The common reverse (tails side) design for the United States Mint's 2014 National Baseball Hall of Fame Commemorative Coins was unveiled today during opening day festivities of Induction Weekend (July 26-28) at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown.

The design, which will appear on the reverses of all three coins in the program, depicts a baseball similar to those used in Major League Baseball®. Inscriptions on each coin's reverse are *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* and *E PLURIBUS UNUM*. Additional inscriptions include *FIVE DOLLARS* on the gold coin, *ONE DOLLAR* on the silver dollar, and *HALF DOLLAR* on the clad coin. Line art of the designs is available in the United States Mint's image library at http://www.usmint.gov/pressroom/?action=photo. United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Don Everhart designed and sculpted the image.

The common reverse design will be on display at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum throughout the rest of the summer, along with the 16 finalist designs for the common obverse (heads side).

The National Baseball Hall of Fame Commemorative Coin Act (Public Law 112-152) authorizes the United States Mint to mint and issue up to 50,000 $5 gold

coins, 400,000 $1 silver coins, and 750,000 half-dollar clad coins in recognition and celebration of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary next year. The coins' reverses will be convex to more closely resemble a baseball, and the obverses (heads side) will be concave, with a design emblematic of the game of baseball. The obverse design is being selected from a public design competition.

Surcharges collected from coin sales - $35 for each gold coin, $10 for each silver coin, and $5 for each half-dollar coin - are authorized to be paid to the National Baseball Hall of Fame to help finance its operations. The United States Mint will release the coins in early 2014.

The United States Mint was created by Congress in 1792 and became part of the Department of the Treasury in 1873. It is the Nation's sole manufacturer of legal tender coinage and is responsible for producing circulating coinage for the Nation to conduct its trade and commerce. The United States Mint also produces numismatic products, including proof, uncirculated, and commemorative coins; Congressional Gold Medals; and silver and gold bullion coins. The United States Mint's numismatic programs are self-sustaining and operate at no cost to the taxpayer.

The thoughts and opinions in the piece are those of their author and are not necessarily the thoughts of the Certified Collectibles Group.

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